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Q. WOMEN IN FINANCE HAVE MADE A LOT OF HEADWAY WITH NAMES SUCH AS CHANDA KOCHHAR AND KALPANA MORPARIA. WHY DO YOU THINK THIS INDUSTRY HAS BEEN SO WOMEN-FRIENDLY?

Radhika: I think this is a combination of the strong mentorship women have received by veterans like KV Kamath, the professionalism this industry has had, and that successful women have set great examples for others to follow. Women are good multi-taskers, lead teams effectively, and handle crises and situations of high pressure very well, all of which are great qualities in the financial services industry.

Vidya: The nature of work is such that women feel more comfortable

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Radhika Gupta



Vidya Shah

As Women's Day approaches, **Radhika Gupta**, business head, *Fore-front Capital*, an Edelweiss Group Company and **Vidya Shah**, CEO, *EdelGive Foundation* tell us why women shine so well in the BFSI sector

"Women are often equal earners and in many cases, bread winners of their families"

Q. WOMEN HAVE ALWAYS BEEN KNOWN TO BE THE BUDGET-KEEPERS OF THEIR FAMILIES, EVEN THOUGH MEN HAVE HAD THE TAG OF BREAD EARNERS. DO YOU SEE THESE TAGS VANISHING WITH TIME OR ARE THEY TRUE, EVEN IN THE CURRENT CONTEXT?

Radhika: While this is a traditional stereotype, I don't think this is relevant in the current times. In today's times of double income earners, women are often equal earners and in many cases, bread winners of their families. They have grown from being budget keepers to also being strong financial and investment planners

for the family. In many parts of the western world, women have taken over as bread winners of the family and I don't see why that can't happen in India.

Vidya: In my opinion, this tag doesn't come with a negative connotation. Women tend to be better budget keepers because they are more responsible for the overall well-being of the family; they feel deeply about the broader issues like health, education, savings, etc. Women should welcome such methods of tagging, which in a way empower them to have more control and a greater say in any decision-making.

Q. HAVE YOU EVER FELT THAT YOU'RE BEING TREATED

DIFFERENTLY (BETTER OR WORSE) AT THE WORKPLACE BECAUSE OF YOUR GENDER?

Radhika: No, and I am fortunate that the financial services industry in both India and the US - where I previously worked - is one of the most professional in this regard. I think corporate India is far more evolved as far as women are concerned than it gets credit for, and many firms - including domestic ones - are truly gender neutral.

Vidya: Despite all our cultural advancement, there is a strong need for organisations to address how comfortable women feel at their workplace, as a large majority has had negative experiences. Having said that, I must also clarify that if we see case to case, though mostly it's not organisation-dependent, but very person-dependent, it still leaves a need for every person to imbibe the culture that the organisation sets through its guiding principles, values, etc.